

Alumna named diversity coordinator

SAMANTHA COLLISON
Campus News Editor | @SammieCollison

As part of Diversity and Inclusion's move to the Provost's Office, 2019 alumna N'ninah Freelon joined the team Jan. 2 as coordinator of diversity and inclusion.

Associate Provost of Diversity and Inclusion Justin Mallett said the Office of Diversity and Inclusion has always had two coordinators, so as soon as he was hired as associate provost, the search began for a second coordinator.

Of the four candidates considered, Mallett said Freelon's knowledge of campus and her ability to build relationships with students made her stand out.

Just 20 days before being hired, Freelon crossed the commencement stage and received her bachelor's degree in human services.

During her four and a half years as a student at Northwest, Freelon worked in the Student Engagement Center, the Office of Student Involvement and as a student ambassador. She was a member of SISTAH, National Panhellenic Council and served as president of the Nu Gamma chapter of Delta Sigma

ma Theta Sorority, Inc. She was also a member of the 2019 homecoming court.

Before becoming involved in student organizations, Freelon said she felt on the outskirts of the University. She said it didn't feel like the place for her until she put herself out there to meet people and see Northwest for what it is outside the classes.

"I was able to see the gap that students that are underrepresented face and the fact that it really is hard to navigate through resources and navigate themselves at a predominantly white institution, but I did it," Freelon said. "I had to work to do it, but I did it, and I want to work to bridge that gap for everybody."

With the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Peace Brunch being a staple event of Diversity and Inclusion, Freelon said right away she threw herself into the planning of the brunch and MLK week events.

With those events concluding Jan. 23, she moved on to planning movie showings and discussions for Black History Month.



RACHEL ADAMSON | NW MISSOURIAN
N'ninah Freelon, who graduated from Northwest in December, was recently hired as the coordinator of diversity and equity. Freelon was one of four candidates for the position and was hired Jan. 2.

SEE FREELON | A4

Student Senate pushes voter registration

MADELINE MAPES
News Reporter | @MadelineDMapes

The Governmental Affairs Committee of Student Senate will work with Greek Life and other organizations across campus to help students get registered to vote by the end of the semester.

At the Jan. 21 Student Senate meeting, Governmental Affairs Committee Chair sophomore Benjamin Kutz announced that Governmental Affairs was teaming up with Greek Life to get students on campus registered to vote before this upcoming election. Kutz said the goal is to get 65% of students in Greek Life registered to vote and then have Greek Life help to get at least 50% of all students on campus registered to vote.

Kutz said only three chapters have agreed to help get more students registered to vote on campus, including Alpha Sigma Alpha, Tri Sig and Sig Tau Gamma. Kutz also said that he is waiting to hear back from other chapters since they are just settling into the new year.

Kutz said there is a voter registration website called Turbovote, where people can register to vote online. In 2018, Governmental Affairs funded a Turbovote extension in Canvas, which helped 1,200 students register to vote.

Kutz plans to use this to cater to students' busy schedules and the fact that some students don't have permanent addresses in Nodaway County.

"The main idea for this was to get the program out there and make it a well-known name so that each year it makes it easier for students to register, because they will be like, 'Oh, it's that time of year again where I need to get on Turbovote,'" Kutz said.

Kutz said the plan is to contact organizations all across campus, including Greek Life, and try to get them to convince their members to register to vote either through Turbovote or in person. Kutz said if Governmental Affairs can get 65% of Greek Life registered to vote, they could use them to spread the word about the importance and the different ways to register.

"There's at least one person that's your friend and that is in Greek Life or affiliated with Greek Life," Kutz said.

Kutz said Governmental Affairs plans on bringing in the Public Relations committee and other committees to create a wider range of students to contact. Governmental Affairs will also use social media and have a campaign table out in the J. W. Jones Student Union to help spread the word about the importance and the ways students can register to vote before elections in November.

According to the U.S. Census, the voter turnout at the national level for people between the ages of 18 to 29 in 2016 was 46%. This was only slightly higher than the 2012 election, which the voter turnout was 45%.

SEE AFFAIRS | A4

VOTER REGISTRATION

MISSOURI

HOW DO I VOTE?

- Submit a completed voter registration form to your local election authority.
- This can be done by mail or in person.

WHERE CAN I DO THIS?

- Local election authority office.
- Drivers licensing office.
- Local public library.

WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING?

- Form of personal identification.

NEBRASKA

HOW DO I VOTE?

- Online registration portal called VoterView
- Participating in Nebraska's Address Confidentiality Program? Contact your county election official.

WHAT DO I NEED?

- Form of personal or state identification card.
- The completed application needs to be submitted on or before the third Friday before the election.

IOWA

HOW DO I VOTE?

- Complete a voter registration form and submit it to your county auditor's office.
- College students can use a home or college address.
- Register to vote on election day
- County auditor will send you a voter registration card.

SOURCE: MISSOURI SECRETARY OF STATE
IOWA SECRETARY OF STATE
NEBRASKA SECRETARY OF STATE

AJ BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

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IN THE NEWS A2 Bearcat Steppers

Steppers headed to nationals two weeks ago without a coach, now athletics considers its options.

IN THE NEWS A3 A bumpy ride

The city of Maryville will spend \$12.4 million reworking South Main Street this summer.

IN A&E

An international student jumped through a lot of hoops to get here. Now, she's struggling to stay.

A7 Long way from home

IN SPORTS

After one of its best performances of the season, Northwest men's basketball is looking for consistency.

A3 On the prowl



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MIDWEST REGIONAL DIVE TEAM | SUBMITTED

The Midwest Regional Dive team holds monthly trainings with everyone who volunteers for the dive team. Nodaway County is set to have a local group of 10-12 volunteers within the next two years.

Local dive team seeks volunteers

KENDRICK CALFEE
Community News Editor | @KoalaCalfree

Nodaway County Sheriff Randy Strong and Maryville Public Safety have collaborated with the Midwest Regional Dive team to implement a training and certification program for divers to train closer to home.

The Midwest Regional dive team has assisted Nodaway County in the past, but it doesn't always have a team ready and operational in the area. To resolve this issue, a Conception Junction, Missouri, man Chuck McIntosh, with the assistance of Emergency Management instructor John Carr, holds a weekly training for people interested in what goes into being on a dive team.

"We want to see a stand-alone dive team in this area, one that's not separate from the Midwest Regional Dive team, just more readily available," McIntosh said.

McIntosh sees 14 individuals each week in classroom training programs held Tuesdays and Thursdays in Valk Center on campus. So far, five women and seven men participate in the program.

McIntosh said recruitment has been positive among attendees and a good number have shown interest — enough that McIntosh is hopeful for a fully functional team to operate in the county in just two years.

"Randy Strong has been very helpful in getting this going," McIntosh said. "We can tell he wants to see a dive team in Nodaway County."

McIntosh, a 68-year-old diver, joined the Midwest Regional Dive Team in 2000 and became an instructor in 2008. He teaches recreational diving as well as public safety diving, which he said both provide a sense of accomplishment and thrill.

He led a team of recreational team members who traveled to the Caribbean, diving in waters close to reefs, which McIntosh said was an experience of a lifetime.

"On the recreational side, we have an opportunity to get away from the aspects of public safety and see things of beauty," McIntosh said.

In a Jan. 22 press release, Strong said Nodaway County, the fourth largest county in Missouri, has been in dire need of a consistent water rescue service. Traditionally serving the surrounding communities of its two physical locations in Clarina, Iowa, and Red Oak, Iowa, the Midwest Regional Dive team will now look to help fill the void of expertise for above and below water search in Nodaway County investigations.

Adding a team specifically in and for Nodaway County is what Strong said partnering with the Midwest Regional Dive Team was long overdue and is a step in the right direction.

"We've needed this for a long time," Strong said. "With as many bodies of water we have in the area and as many flash flood warnings that have ensued, we need this."

The Midwest Missouri Region-

al dive team has assisted the area before in cases of missing people on bodies of water, recovering victims who have drowned, provide evidence searches below water and other services local law enforcement asked for.

McIntosh said he enjoys instructing learners young and old and seeing them have a "lightbulb moment," which he said in turn helps people gain more self-confidence.

"We are doing things that are thrilling and scary to volunteers at first," McIntosh said. "But when they get in there and get their feet wet, it's quite the experience."

The Midwest Regional Dive team is funded largely through donations and grants. It does not have a dedicated budget for supplies or tools, but is rather composed of government and public organizations that control day-to-day operations.

Kenny Hammon, the incident commander for the dive team, oversees all operations of the group. He said the total team consists of volunteers from four Iowa departments: Red Oak Fire Department, Corning Fire Department, Cash County Sheriff's Office, Clarinda Fire Department. Volunteers not associated with departments are also part of the team.

The departments share resources and supplies that the whole team uses to execute rescues, train and use recreationally.

Hammon said he is eager to instate a team in Nodaway County.

"I can't wait for these guys to get trained and get them in the water this summer," Hammon said. "That's when it gets really fun."

The whole team trains once a month together, usually in one of the Iowa locations. They also travel to Arkansas for certain training and certification processes.

There are two general certifications: open water and advanced open water. The biggest difference is that advanced open water requires a deep dive, usually up to 90 feet.

"In the deep dive we observe their bodily response to depth," McIntosh said. "An instructor is with them as a guide."

With his training in classrooms on campus, McIntosh said many begin in the recreational stage and move on to public safety when they are comfortable. Public safety is more intense for beginners because it involves helping victims.

"The whole atmosphere is different in those situations," McIntosh said. "But with it does come the satisfaction of helping people."

Emergency and disaster management majors are knowledgeable about the classes on campus, but McIntosh said he welcomes anyone who would like to volunteer. He also said the program is looking for people with medical backgrounds to volunteer to assist divers on shore when the team is executing dives.

Alumna steps up following coach unexpectedly leaving

LIZ SWAFFORD
News Reporter | @lizswafford3

Former Bearcat Steppers coach Darbi Fuhrman recently left her position, opening up a spot just before the team headed to Universal Dance Association Nationals in Orlando, Florida, Jan. 17. Kiersten Hill, a Stepper alumna, volunteered to help the team in order to prepare for the competition.

Hill graduated last spring but is still attending Northwest to earn her master's degree. A few women on the team reached out to her and asked if she would be willing to help the team out.

Hill said she was there to lend a helping hand. She was there for choreography changes, formation cleaning and anything that she could do to make sure the Steppers looked competition ready.

"It was pretty much me being there and saying 'Whatever you guys need from me today, that's what we'll do,'" Hill said.

Hill was a Stepper for all four years she attended Northwest and competed in Nationals all four years. She said being on the other side of the competition was eye-opening.

"It was really different than when I was dancing; I didn't realize how much stuff had to be handled before we went," Hill said.

Hill danced with some of the women on the team, since she just graduated last semester. The four captains, senior Sarah Amos, senior Alyson Dye, junior Andie Dain and junior Madison Skeen, were the ones who reached out to Hill and asked her to come back.

Hill said she wasn't sure how the Steppers were going to treat her, whether she was going to be more of a coaching figure or just a friend there to help.

"As I was going in there, I said they just need to be communicating with me through everything. They were so respectful; they just listened to what I said," Hill said. "I would talk to the captains and ask if this is what they wanted too, and then we'd just take it from there."

Director of Athletics Andy Peterson also helped the team out to make sure it was getting what it needed.



MADI GLASS | NW MISSOURIAN

Kiersten Hill, a recent Steppers alumna, stepped in as the coach to help prepare the Bearcat Steppers for Nationals after coach Darbi Fuhrman left the position. Hill danced with the Steppers during her four years at the University while earning her undergraduate degree.

Peterson said transitioning was really difficult for everyone when Fuhrman departed middle of the season.

"It really put everyone in a tough spot, especially the girls. The freshmen only got a coach for half a season. The sophomores had her for a year. The juniors have to adjust to new leadership for their senior year. It was just really difficult," Peterson said.

Peterson and Jason Sack, head cheerleading coach, did all the paperwork for the Steppers so Hill could just focus on the dancing aspect.

Peterson said Hill was there to help make sure the team could have an outsider perspective.

"She was an extra set of eyes for the team. You can only do so much from watching in the mirror, especially when you're focused on yourself; you can't really help the

whole team," Peterson said. "She was a great resource for providing quick feedback in the moment."

Peterson and the other members of the athletic board are meeting later this week to discuss filling the coaching position. They are deciding what they think should be done with the entire spirit program.

Originally the program had one head coach for cheer and one head coach for dance. They are talking about whether or not they should make a head coach that oversees both and smaller positions for the individual teams or if they should just keep it the same.

Peterson said it's difficult to find someone for a town this size, especially when the job isn't high paying.

"They do this because they want to give back. Coaches help because they love the sport," Peterson said.

MLK Week events center on building awareness, inclusion



MADI GLASS | NW MISSOURIAN

Students gathered in the J.W. Jones Student Union Ballroom for a trivia night on black cinema hosted by SISTAH. The trivia questions included different categories such as history, drama, comedy, romance and musical.

LIZ SWAFFORD
News Reporter | @lizswafford3

Throughout the week of Jan. 20, multicultural organizations on campus hosted events for Martin Luther King Jr. Week.

The Black Student Union, SISTAH, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and the Minority Men's Organization all participated in hosting events to honor King.

One of the events was the Black Student Union's CPR training session at Martindale Gymnasium Jan. 21.

Kari Frye, board member of the BSU, said the organization chose to do this event because it was a good skill to have.

"It was a good time to implement it into MLK Week because it was about community. When you can have that skill to help someone in your community, it's a really good thing," Frye said.

SISTAH hosted a trivia night themed around black cinema in the J.W. Jones Student Union Ballroom. Around 50 people attended the event.

SISTAH member Infiniti Anderson said they based the event off of Student Activities Council's movie showing last semester.

"Last semester SAC did a movie showing of black horror, which is black cinema more focused around horror movies," Anderson said. "So we just worked from that and did all black cinema questions. It was categories like history, drama, comedy, romance, musical."

All of SISTAH's board members also attended the day of service that was held Jan. 20.

The MMO held a movie showing at the Station West Room. They showed "13th," a Netflix documentary about the history of racial inequality in the United States and the amount of African Americans that were imprisoned during the civil rights movement.

Prentiss Smith, board member of MMO, said the reason the organization chose this movie was because the board felt the message was important, especially during MLK Week.

"We kind of thought, 'How does it tie with MLK?' I believe somebody explained to me that they thought Martin Luther King Jr. would want to show behind the scenes on why is this injustice happening and what can we do about

it," Smith said.

Around 10-15 people attended the event. Smith said the reason they chose a movie night was because it was simple yet impactful.

"We didn't want to put too much effort into it, but we also wanted to leave people with something to think about as they left the movie," Smith said.

Delta Sigma Theta had a toiletry drive that ran during the week before MLK Week, from Jan. 15-22.

Alica Trotter, chapter member, said the chapter collected hygiene products such as soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, body washes and even water.

"We ended up getting a box full. Along with a 40 pack of water. I would say around 40 items individually," Trotter said.

Some of the chapter members volunteered at the Family and Children's Center on the day of service and found out that the center needed cleaning supplies.

"The chapter itself is donating some cleaning supplies that the center needs. Before we donate, we are going to go to the store and buy some of those things," Trotter said.

AASCU receives \$2.5 million grant

SAMANTHA COLLISON
Campus News Editor | @SammieCollison

The American Association of Colleges and Universities received a \$2.5 million, 2-year Intermediaries for Scale grant from the Gates Foundation to increase student success outcomes at its member universities, including Northwest.

AASCU is a national association of almost 400 colleges and universities dedicated to serving underrepresented populations and research to advance economic progress and cultural development.

Director of Academic Success and Retention Allison Hoffmann leads the project on the University's behalf.

Hoffmann said the grant aims to scale student success efforts for all member institutions, and this effort is being led by the five cohort institutions, of which Northwest is one.

According to an AASCU news release, there are four key goals associated with the award: increasing awareness of successful strategies among campus communities, informing key campus decision-makers about successful strategies, supporting transformation by providing guidance and resources for making changes in policy and practice and building connections across institutions.

Hoffman said this research and support network will enhance the Student Success Center's efforts toward academic success and retention by identifying gaps, focusing on areas of potential improvement and developing action plans.

"Data shows a key opportunity is to better serve first-generation,



MADI NOLTE | NW MISSOURIAN

Biomedical sciences major Gabby Zahn and medicinal chemistry major Slade McAfee take advantage of the Student Success Center's quiet atmosphere during the second week of classes as they work together to complete homework.

underrepresented and Pell-eligible students," Hoffmann said in an email. "(The grant) allows Northwest to take a holistic look at policies and processes and refine these to better serve all students and to better serve students with services beyond the first year."

Hoffmann said this effort can also benefit Northwest as an institu-

tion, since a higher level of student success could make the University more competitive among its peers.

"With enhanced focus on student completion performance, Northwest will yield better overall performance as an organization and assist the likes of accreditors, state agencies, and potential funders," Hoffmann said in an email.

In a University news release, Northwest President John Jasinski said as a cohort institution, he hopes Northwest can benefit other AASCU member institutions with its existing systems for student success.

"With humility, pride and passion, we look forward to continuing national leadership in collaborating with AASCU and our cohort

institutions in building a scaled student success strategy for the broader AASCU membership," Jasinski said in the news release.

Northwest joined AASCU in 2019, awarding Northwest's Academic Success and Retention Unit with the Student Success and College Completion award in October.

South Main construction set for summer

KENDRICK CALFEE
Community News Editor | @KoalaCalfree

Though potholes are riddling the streets of Maryville, the city still has a street beautification project with an estimated \$12.4 million price-tag set to take form summer 2020, making prioritizing funds a discussed focus point of city officials.

The South Main Improvement Project, which has been in the works since early 2015, has an approaching date of construction set for July 30.

Plans for redirecting traffic and keeping roads efficient for commuters is increasingly important for city staff after hearing public concerns.

Several traffic studies have served as a motivator for the proj-

ect, as well as improving city tourism. Several projects the city has taken on are with an underlying goal of attracting consumers to the local area, buying local and stimulating growth in the city.

The South Main Improvement Project page on the city website outlines the project as a whole.

It describes the process of engineering and construction as "the best way to serve existing and future travel demands along South Main Street."

City Manager Greg McDanel said the construction company SK Design Group Inc. of Overland Park, Kansas, entered an agreement with the city to conduct engineering services for the project. SK Design worked with the city before on projects like the refor-

mation and design of Fourth Street and the arch denoting "Northwest Missouri State University."

Overall project goals for South Main are to provide a more appealing look to the area while forming ideal road design for the popularly traveled corridor.

City staff, including members of the city council and the Maryville Downtown Improvement Organization, have all said the project is a step in the right direction.

"The project will reconstruct approximately one and a half miles of South Main Street," McDanel said. "We have had and will continue to have meetings with property owners and businesses impacted by the project."

The construction process is scheduled to last from July 2020

through June 2022. It will add sidewalks and more accessible ways of passage for pedestrians, install additional traffic lights, improve designated turn lanes, relocate utility lines and design more advanced and aesthetically pleasing entryways to businesses.

All of these changes formulate a hefty price tag, which the city was able to budget for from national funding.

The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded Maryville \$10.4 million in grant funds after reviewing 850 applicants nationwide for the aid.

Only 90 other applicants received grant funds requested for.

Mayor Rachael Martin said working with staff on applying for grants and drafting provisions on

the South Main Improvement Project has been a highlight of her career in public office.

"South Main is likely the most traveled corridor in our community," Martin said in an email interview. "The attention and funds from USDOT for the South Main Improvement Project are significant."

The city will continue to hold public meetings for ordinary citizens to express concerns, as well as closed meetings with businesses and property owners to address any needs not being met in the engineering process.

Citizens are also encouraged to attend bi-weekly city council meetings held 7 p.m. every other Monday, where there is time allocated for citizens to be heard.

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POLICE BLOTTERS

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Northwest Missouri State University Police Department

Jan. 22

There was a closed investigation for stealing at Roberta Hall.

A summons was issued to **Nahshonn Rick**, 17, of Gladstone, Missouri, for stealing at Hudson Hall.

Jan. 23

A summons was issued to **Blythe Dunlap**, 22, for stealing at Lot 38.

There was a closed investigation for two liquor law violations at Roberta Hall.

Jan. 26

There is an open investigation for harassment at Dieterich Hall.

Maryville Department of Public Safety

Jan. 15

A summons was issued to **Seti L. Young**, 19, for no valid driver's license, failure to maintain financial responsibility and an equipment violation on the 900 block of South Main Street.

Jan. 19

There is an ongoing investigation for lost or stolen property on the 600 block of North Market Street.

Jan. 20

There is an ongoing investigation for property damage on the 500 block of East Sixth Street.

Jan. 21

A wallet was recovered on the 200 block of East Third Street.

Jan. 22

There is an ongoing investigation for property damage on the 200 block of West Seventh Street.

A summons was issued to **Jer'mika M. Jones**, 18, of Kansas City, Missouri, for failure to register a motor vehicle and failure to maintain financial responsibility on the 100 block of South Main Street.

A summons was issued to **David B. Allestad**, 27, for driving while intoxicated, speeding and failure to maintain financial responsibility on the 200 block of East Second Street.

Jan. 25

A summons was issued to **Joseph D. Weis**, 19, of Omaha, Nebraska, for affray and minor in possession on the 200 block of West Fifth Street.

A summons was issued to **Ryan C. David**, 18, of Omaha, Nebraska, for affray, minor in possession, possession of a fake I.D. and under 19 in a bar on the 200 block of West Fifth Street.

A summons was issued to **Abigail M. Nguyen**, 19, of Kansas City, Missouri, for minor in possession and possession of a fake I.D. on the 400 block of North Buchanan Street.

A summons was issued to **Adelaide R. Watts**, 19, of Omaha, Nebraska, for minor in possession and possession of a fake I.D. on the 400 block of North Buchanan Street.

Jan. 26

A summons was issued to **Emma A. Dorsey**, 20, for minor in possession and an equipment violation on the 600 block of North Buchanan Street.

A summons was issued to **Benjamin J. Spicer**, 20, of Parkville, Missouri, and **Alexander G. Gardner**, 21, of Parkville, Missouri, for disorderly conduct on the 400 block of North Buchanan Street.

Student Senate examines excess funds

MADELINE MAPES
News Reporter I @MadelineDMapes

The Student Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Chair encourages students to come to Student Senate to ask for appropriations and recognitions and would like to see some changes made to the Student Senate bylaws.

Sophomore Benjamin Kutz, the governmental affairs committee chair, said that he also has goals to write new bylaws for Student Senate to fix any discrepancies with the current bylaws.

“Governmental Affairs has been one of those committees that is just like ... we don’t have a direction on spending our money,” Kutz said.

Kutz said the Governmental Affairs budget, which is within the overall Student Senate budget, is split into two separate accounts. One account is for the committee’s normal operations and the other is for the Legislative Reception, which is a trip that Governmental

tal Affairs takes to Jefferson City in February to lobby for funding for higher education and for other causes that students feel passionate about.

Kutz said since the trip is such a big and complicated trip to plan, it usually takes more money than some other trips done by other committees.

Kutz also said the normal operations budget is used just like any other committee would use their budget. This budget is dedicated to events such as booths in the J. W. Jones Student Union.

It is currently unknown how large both the normal operations budget and the Legislative Reception budget are. Debielle Patee-Merrill, the executive treasurer of Student Senate, said that the two budgets are completely separate. Kutz added that the two budgets do not interact at all.

Kutz said the committee’s goals for the semester are to have a successful voter registration campaign, a successful Legislative Re-

ception trip, to get some bylaws rewritten for Student Senate and to get more student organizations on campus to ask for funding from Student Senate.

The Governmental Affairs Committee is working to get at least 50% of students on campus registered to vote by the end of the semester. Kutz and the rest of the Governmental Affairs Committee are striving for this goal through working with various organizations on campus to spread the word of an online way to register to vote through Turbovote.

Kutz said when he came to his position of Governmental Affairs Committee Chair, he noticed some discrepancies in the current Student Senate bylaws, such as the bylaws state that Senators are required to be a part of two committees when Student Senate actually only requires them to be in one.

The last goal of Kutz and the Governmental Affairs Committee is to get students and student organizations to

some to Student Senate to ask for appropriations and recognitions.

Appropriations are when Student Senate gives money to organizations when they need it, and recognitions are when Student Senate officially recognizes new organizations on campus.

The money that is used to make appropriations comes from a rollover budget, which is money from last year’s budget that was not used and is rolled into the next year’s budget.

“Right now, our rollover budget ... is fairly large, and we currently have no way of spending it. ... We have no way of having people apply for us to spend it,” Kutz said.

Since there is no way for students to apply to receive appropriations, not many students go to Student Senate for organizational funding.

Another part of the rollover budget is that it could be used for improvements on campus. However, not many students or organizations know about this, so the funds just roll over again the next year.

FREELON CONTINUED FROM A1

Mallett said Freelon’s responsibilities don’t differ heavily from those of fellow coordinator Adam Gonzales’, but they focus on different areas. Both are responsible for developing programming, working closely with students and recruiting underrepresented students — especially in the Kansas City, Missouri, area.

As familiar as she is with the University and its culture, Freelon said the transition from full-time student to full-time University employee has been challenging, especially disconnecting herself from student organizations she is no longer a part of.

“It’s definitely different seeing things from the lens of a professional, but in the same sentence,

it’s still Northwest, and it still feels like home,” Freelon said. “I’ve also had a lot of personal transitions I’ve had to make which have been difficult, but it’s not any different from the transitions I had to make leaving home and coming here.”

With Freelon being a freshman when the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion first formed in 2016, she watched it go through a myriad of changes throughout her time as a student, but what has changed most is her perspective.

“When I was a student, I would say the view of the office, it seemed like it was geared toward a certain group of students, but I think since I’ve been on the professional side ... I was able to realize yes, we celebrate diversity and certain groups on campus, but another part of our office is in inclusion and making sure that every student feels includ-

ed,” Freelon said.

Although she doesn’t have a concrete idea of how long she plans to stay in her position, Freelon said during her time here, she wants to find a niche to study and train in thoroughly in order to improve her work with the student body.

She also emphasized her desire to be the bridge between underrepresented students and success that she wished she had when she was a freshman.

While not yet ready to move on from Northwest, Freelon’s dream is to get a doctorate in child psychology and work with children who have suffered trauma and abuse, whether in school counseling, through private practice or a daycare.

Freelon has a large, blended family and is the oldest of her biological siblings. Because of her family, she said she has always

wanted to work with children, but it wasn’t until her teen years that she developed a passion for victims of trauma and abuse.

“The trauma and abuse part came later, when I kind of reflected on myself and some things that I’ve been through, some things that people around me had been through,” Freelon said. “And being able to understand the fact that you can go through these things as a child and still be something or somebody, I think so many people get discouraged by their childhoods or their past.”

Freelon said throughout the hiring process, there were moments she felt scared or unqualified, but she said she was put in her position for a reason, and she plans to take full advantage of the rest of her time at Northwest to make the world better.



MARTINA PASCUZZO | NW MISSOURIAN

Janice Elaine Reno is assisted by Angie Cordell to get registered to vote Jan. 27. Missouri voters need to register by Feb. 12 in order to vote in the presidential primary election. Voters’ registration for 2020 elections are held at the Nodaway County Administration Building in the Clerk Office.

ELECTIONS CONTINUED FROM A1

Patton said if a student is not registered to vote in Nodaway

County but wishes to vote absentee they can contact their county clerk or otherwise election authority in the county they are registered in to request the absentee ballot.

“Nodaway County currently

has 12,349 registered voters,” Patton said. “Five hundred and twenty eight of those are marked inactive or pending due to information needed.”

For more information or addi-

tional questions on how to get registered to vote, one can visit their secretary of state website or contact their local election authority.

AFFAIRS CONTINUED FROM A1

President of College Democrats junior Spencer Owens, who is currently working in Jefferson City for Representative Gina Mitten, said in a phone interview he believes that Student Senate and Governmental Affairs is making an excellent

move in trying to get students on campus registered to vote.

Owens said a lot of college students don’t know how to register to vote or where to go to register because it was not something they were shown how to do during high school. He said it is crucial that Student Senate is making the move to get students on campus registered.

“It should be as easy as possible to register to vote. When we start making it more difficult to register to vote, we start turning away potential voters,” Owens said.

Owens said he wants students to know that it is not hard to register to vote in Nodaway County. The University is within the County limits, which allows students to go to the

County Clerk’s office in the Court House where they can register to vote that day.

Owens said he encourages students to go to get registered to vote or to make sure students are properly registered since the 2020 election year is such a big year with the presidential election and the congressional election.

Bryant's impact felt beyond basketball

NATHAN ENGLISH
Columnist
@ThananEnglish



I wanted so badly for the news about the death of basketball legend Kobe Bryant to be a hoax. A concocted story created by a depraved individual for attention, but it wasn't. It's true, and that is so much worse.

Bryant and his daughter, Gianna, perished in a helicopter crash along with seven others Jan. 26 in Calabasas, California. My thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends devastated by the loss of their loved ones in this terrible tragedy.

As I previously mentioned, my first response to the news about Bryant was denial, and when I confirmed it was real, that denial turned into immense sadness. I have never met Bryant, never been to one of his games and I wasn't even a Lakers fan, yet I cried when I heard the news.

Obviously, the pain and grief I feel over the loss of Bryant and his daughter is nothing compared to his family or any others close to the two, but it is still there. It feels weird to feel so much grief over a person I have never even met, but sports have a funny way of creating attachments.

I grew up loving basketball, which meant I grew up, in some capacity, idolizing the Black Mamba. I was never particularly great at the sport — good enough to get by in a small Missouri town — but I never had a shot at a post-high-school career. Skill and talent aside, I wanted to be No. 8 or 24 on the Lakers. He was the ultimate example of athletic toughness, a competitive spirit, greatness and on top of that, he was just cool.

I used to prepare for middle school basketball games by watching compilations of Bryant hitting seemingly impossible shots with ease. I think I averaged 4 points and 3 turnovers a game in middle school, but that didn't stop me from trying to be him on the court. Every time I shot a fadeaway, I was thinking about whether it resembled his or not. If you couldn't guess, it did not.

The difference between Mamba and other athletes is the way he transcended the game he played. People that have never watched an NBA game in their life say "Kobe!" whenever they throw something in the trash. Business professionals, musical artists and countless others were told to attack everything they do with "Mamba Mentality" Kobe Bryant's patented style of preparation.

Bryant was more than an athlete; he was an icon across the world.

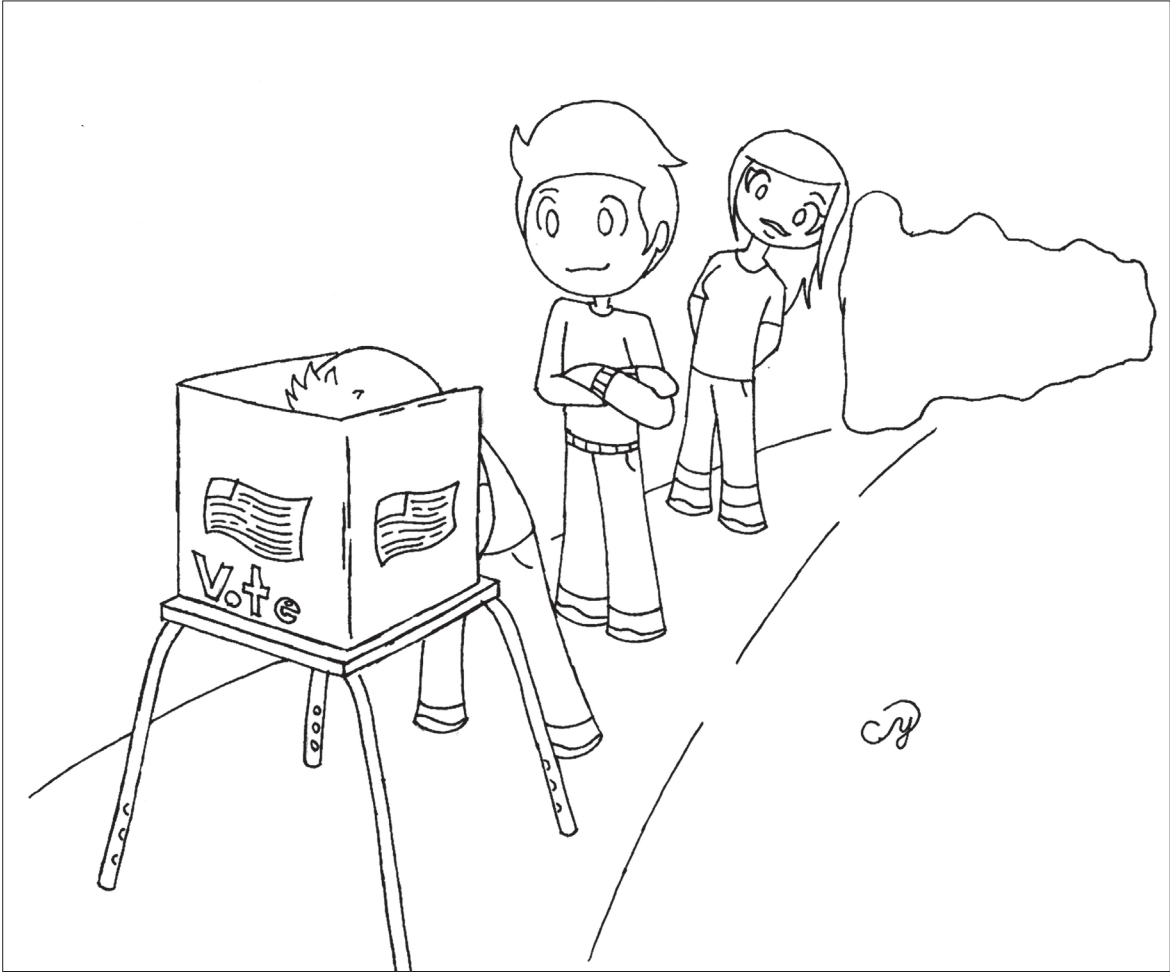
He was far from perfect. He had skeletons in his closet like most people, but he seemed to have attained a different aura since his retirement from basketball. Bryant was, from all accounts, a dedicated father, husband and a great ambassador for the game of basketball.

It's a complex thing to mourn someone you never knew personally. A part of me keeps telling myself I'm overreacting; I never knew him personally, so why am I reacting this way?

Maybe it's because I loved him as an athlete or how he changed the way I look at the game that I am so passionate about. Or maybe it's because of the countless hours I spent trying to recreate his best moments on the hoop in my driveway.

Regardless, I had a connection with Bryant, and he is gone now. He touched the lives of millions, and a loss that large is going to sting for a while. Tell those close to you that you love them, hug your loved ones a little tighter, and pray for those directly affected.

Bryant will be missed, and sports will never be the same.



CHRIS YOUNG | NW MISSOURIAN

OUR VIEW:

Students need to register to vote as primaries near

The Governmental Affairs Committee of Northwest's Student Senate is enacting a plan it hopes will register 65% of Greek Life members and 50% of the Northwest's campus population to vote by the end of the semester.

So far, though, only three Greek organizations on Northwest's campus — Alpha Sigma Alpha, Tri Sig and Sig Tau Gamma — have agreed to help the Governmental Affairs Committee's efforts, Student Senate Committee Chair Benjamin Kutz said.

For the committee, the plan is a noble cause with an ambitious goal. But in the scope of today's political climate, the need for student voter turnout is at an all-time high. More than three Greek organizations need to join the effort in registering student voters. More than 65% of the Greek-affiliated population needs to vote in the upcoming elections. And most importantly, more than 50% of students on campus need to register.

In the 2016 general election, which saw Donald Trump defeat Hillary Clinton by more than 500,000 votes in Missouri, 66.56% of registered voters turned out for the election, according to an unofficial voter turnout report from Missouri's Secretary of State office. In Nodaway County, though, that percentage was higher, with 9,458 of the county's 13,037 voters showing up to the polls in November 2016, according to the same document.

The problem, though, is not getting voters to show up for general elections that take place within presidential cycles. In 2018, even with one of Missouri's two senate seats

at stake, only 58.23% of the state and 59.29% of the county showed up to vote in the November election, according to the Secretary of State.

The turnout for local elections, where the student voice has the most direct potential to be heard in Nodaway County, is even smaller. Only 774 Maryville voters weighed in on the Use Tax ballot initiative in April of last year, a measure that passed in a 452-322 vote, according to The Maryville Forum.

In April 2016, an eighth-of-a-cent tax increase needed to build the Mozingo Conference Center passed 588-583, according to The Forum. Five votes decided an election that affected an entire town, five votes that City Manager Greg McDanel said last April, when informing students on the Use Tax measure, would not have come without student participation in the election.

There are more than 7,000 students enrolled at Northwest. The effect those students could have on a local election — if they would just take 10 minutes and register to vote in Nodaway County, the community where most students live for at least eight months a year — would be immeasurable. Students alone, if they all rallied around one candidate or ballot measure in Maryville, could change the outcomes of entire elections.

The deadline to register to vote in Missouri's March 10 presidential primary is Feb. 12. Find 10 minutes between now and then and ensure your voice is heard.

YOUR VIEW:

Are you registered to vote in Nodaway County?



"I am not. I'm from back home, like, way up north in Iowa, so I just haven't because I'm not permanently living down here, so I didn't know if I could."

- Lizzy Herrick | Senior
Art Education



"I am not registered to vote in Nodaway County because I'm not originally from any U.S. state. I'm from the Bahamas, initially. I've been living in Missouri since I came to school, and I have an American passport so I can vote, but I'm not registered in any spe-

- Cameron Knowles | Junior
Elementary Education



"I am not registered to vote in Nodaway County. I think I'm registered to vote in my hometown ... Waukee Iowa, kind of, like, by Des Moines. ... I guess I'm just not as informed with, like, voting and, if I'm enrolled in Des Moines, Iowa, am I only supposed to vote in Iowa? Or if I can vote anywhere? Just not informed."

- Kailee Allen | Sophomore
Applied Health Science

Informed voters needed in election cycle

NATHAN ENGLISH
Columnist
@ThananEnglish



There are two things that are "off-limits" for discussion on a first date: religion and politics. It seems like a pretty bad way to get to know a person, but OK I guess. However, the topic of politics cannot be ignored, especially by young voters in this political season. I know politics can often be a dense slog, but paying attention is important to ensure what happens now and in the future is the best for the most amount of people.

Around 10% of eligible voters in the 2020 election are between the ages of 18 to 23, according to the Pew Research Center. Young people have a large amount of power in the next election, but only if they come out in strong numbers.

Political fatigue is an issue in

this country, especially with the added use of social media and our current president tweeting more than most teenagers. President Donald Trump is in the middle of an impeachment trial and focusing on the facts of that case and how it affects the next election. If you don't like the way your congressman or senator handled the process of impeachment, vote them out.

The reelection rate for those in the House of Representatives in 2018 was 91%, and it was 84% for the Senate, according to Open Secrets. The approval rating for Congress is 23%, according to a Gallup poll Jan. 5. So, clearly something isn't working here like the people elected to Congress.

It seems as though the opinion of voters is that everybody else's legislator is the problem, but somebody or a lot of somebodies has a person misrepresenting them in Congress. The system isn't working, but informed voting has the power to fix it.

Sens. Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren are duking it out with others in Iowa over the first victory in the primaries. Iowa can be an important test to see whether a candidate has the legs or won't reach the finish line.

The Iowa Caucus winners for the Democrats going all the way back to 2000 have gone on to be the nominee for the Democrats. So, if you are waiting to see who is going to challenge Trump, Iowa is a good indication.

Local politics are not nearly as sexy as national politics, but it may have a bigger impact, especially Maryville politics. Maryville water is kind of bad. This could be caused by the algae bloom on Mozingo Lake where we get the water, not helped by the fact that the filter membrane is two years expired and the Public Works Director C.E. Goodall bragged about it. Goodall is an official appointed by someone who is elected.

A use tax was passed on the bal-

lot in 2019, which affects online purchases in Maryville. A use tax is a sales tax that is added to online purchases to generate tax revenue for the city. Breaking news: young people use the internet more, crazy I know, but that means the use tax is going to heavily affect college students.

National politics seem more important but because of a little thing called federalism, the most immediate concerns are left to state and local governments, making the people in office in those positions much more important.

The date to register to vote in November 2020 is Oct. 7 in Missouri, which is early, Nebraska deadline is Oct. 16 and the deadline for Iowa is Oct. 23. Voting in national, state and local elections is a way people can affect change, and they can only make responsible choices if they are informed. So kind of like the Washington Post says, pay attention because democracy sucks when you are uninformed.

NORTHWEST MISSOURIAN

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CONTACT US

Newsroom: (660) 562-1224
Advertising: (660) 562-1635
Circulation: (660) 562-1528
Fax: (660) 562-1521

NEWS STAFF

Andrew Bradbury Designer
Makayla Polak Designer
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SUDOKU

By MetroCreative

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HOROSCOPE

By MetroCreative

- ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20**
Aries, a budding relationship appears to be on the cusp of taking the next step. Your relationships are your own, so don't be afraid to slow down if things feel like they're going too fast.
- TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21**
Taurus, now is the time to institute a change to your daily routine if that's been on your mind. Planetary energy is pushing you on a course of self-discovery.
- GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21**
Gemini, small influencers in your life may be imperceptible, but they are slowly turning the wheels of change and you'll soon be able to realize what is in store.
- CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22**
Connect with your spiritual foundations, Cancer. They will be your guide through a week that figures to have its share of ups and downs. Faith will help you ride it out.
- LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23**
The week ahead should be fairly positive for you, Leo. This lifting of weight will inspire newfound freedom to embark on interesting projects or pursue new interests.
- VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22**
You may be looking for fulfillment in your love life or your career this week, Virgo. Some measure of liberation will occur in the days ahead.
- LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23**
Libra, as the days unfold, you may find yourself feeling more creative and perhaps a bit more rebellious in your thinking. It is okay to want to set out on a new path.
- SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22**
Oftentimes you are a master of taking a difficult situation and turning it on its head immediately, Scorpio. Those unique skills may be put to the test this week.
- SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21**
A reorganization will occur in your life. This may involve physically moving things around the house or an intellectual reorganization that produces a new perspective.
- CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20**
Good times with the ones you love do not have to take a back seat to professional goals, Capricorn. Find a way to strike a balance, even if it means delegating more often.
- AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18**
Even if you have a mind to help the ones you love, those people have to be receptive to your assistance, Aquarius. Give them a chance to come around.
- PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20**
Don't let others talk you into something you don't want to be involved with, Pisces. Stand your ground or walk away.

Just keep going



CHRIS YOUNG | NW MISSOURIAN



CROSSWORD

By MetroCreative

Last Week's Solutions

8	2	6	9	1	4	5	7	3
7	5	9	6	3	2	8	1	4
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E	D	E	R		D	A	S			B	R	I	N

- CLUES ACROSS
1. Beer ingredient

5. Popular FOX TV show

11. Recurring from time to time

14. Criticized severely

15. Musician

18. German urban center

19. Quenched

21. Human gene

23. Indian music

24. Accumulate

28. One who graduated

29. Atomic #109

30. Semitic fertility god

32. Sportscaster Patrick

33. Child's dining accessory

35. Payment (abbr.)

36. Guitarist's tool

39. Dabbling ducks

41. Commercial

42. Style someone's hair

44. Biu-Mandara language

46. Actress Spelling

47. Large hole in the ground

49. One-masted sailboats

52. Tropical Asian plant

56. Concur

58. Latin term for charity

60. The number below the line in a fraction

62. Reddish browns

63. This (Spanish)
- CLUES DOWN
1. Belong to he

2. One time only

3. Parent-teacher groups

4. Puts in place

5. Editing

6. In the course of

7. Helps injured people (abbr.)

8. OJ trial judge

9. Resist authority (slang)

10. Formerly alkenols

12. "Cheers" actress Perlman

13. Jewelled headdress

16. Viking Age poet

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	56						57		58				59
					60				61				
											62		
												63	

17. Vanuatu island

20. Wish harm upon

22. Unit of length

25. Blood type

26. Drain

27. Do-gooders

29. Advanced degree

31. Business designation

34. Chinese-American actress Ling

36. Performs on stage

37. Slang for money

38. Large Russian pie

40. The Mount Rushmore State

43. Narrow inlet

45. News organization (abbr.)

48. Scarlett's home

50. Micturates

51. Monetary unit
53. Any customary observance or practice

54. Sons of Poseidon

55. Facilitates grocery shopping

57. Standard operating procedure

58. Former OSS

59. Midway between south and southeast

61. The Wolverine State



MADI NOLTE | NW MISSOURIAN
Northwest senior and international student Taina Dias (right) is staying with Northwest professor Cindy Kenkel (center) and former Northwest staffer Phil Kenkel (left) as she attempts to finish out the last 30 credit hours of her college career while struggling with mounting financial struggles and the constraints of an on-campus job.

‘My life is all over the place’

International student reflects on winding path to Northwest

ANDREW WEGLEY
Managing Editor | @andrewwegley

Cindy and Phil Kenkel had invited Northwest students to live in their Maryville home, which sits about a mile north of the University’s campus, before they did so again in July 2019. But this time, they both acknowledged, felt different. They were never as embedded into the Kenkels’ lives as Taina Dias, a Northwest senior and Brazil native, is now.

Cindy Kenkel, an assistant professor of management at Northwest, didn’t plan on inviting Dias, a student in her managerial communication class, to move in when she first started hanging around the Kenkel household. It was, at first, a welcomed distraction for both parties.

The Kenkels were empty nesters, and Cindy Kenkel, in particular, enjoyed the company. Dias was an international student, working through a bout of mental health issues while dealing with the suspect landlord of a mold-filled house, one Dias couldn’t afford to air condition in the midst of a Maryville summer.

Cindy Kenkel recognized Dias’ mental health struggles and invited her over. Phil Kenkel, a retired Northwest staffer and former landlord himself, recognized the dangers of Dias’ leasing situation. The move made perfect sense.

“I’m like, ‘OK, we have air conditioning on. One more person isn’t gonna add anything to it,’” Cindy Kenkel said, recalling the mid-summer conversation she had with Dias. “So I thought this would be — and we did need help with these dogs. ... It really was a win-win.”

Back then, the Kenkels did not know the full scope of Dias’ financial struggles. They did not know if she would stay with them once summer turned to fall and classes resumed. They did not know then the effect they would have on her. But as they retold their unlikely family story Jan. 24, sitting on the blue sofa in their Maryville living room with the thermostat set at 67 degrees — as hot as it gets in the Kenkel household — it is clear the Kenkels have a firmer grasp now on what they’ve meant to Dias, and perhaps more importantly, what she has meant to them.

“I’ve been retired for four years now, going on five,” Phil Kenkel, who spent his 28 years at Northwest serving in TRIO Program, working with troubled youth. “(Dias) just to kind of reminded me of what my purpose was for all those years.”

“It makes me just look at things differently,” Cindy Kenkel said. “I’ve always been kind of the push-

over teacher that lets people turn things in late, but sometimes I would take it personally if somebody didn’t do a good job on something for me. And now I kind of look at it like, ‘I have no idea what they’re going through now.’”

Before Dias inserted herself into the lives and hearts of the Kenkels, before she arrived in Maryville at all, she had to get here. She followed a path that took her from Brazil to Australia to various stops around the Midwest. A decade ago, she was mentally planning out a life she intended to live entirely in Brazil. Six years before she sat in the Kenkel’s living room and described parts of her journey, she had never heard of the Midwest. Four years ago, she barely spoke English.

Now, of course, she is here.

“I know,” Dias said. “My life is all over the place.”

Origins

She knows it sounds cliché, and perhaps borders on artificial, but Dias didn’t plan on coming to the United States until she stumbled upon an American cultural icon of the late-2000s.

She was enamored with it and driven by it. When she first came across “High School Musical,” she was determined to come to the U.S. Dias credits the Disney movie series as an accelerator in her arrival, if not the chief reason she is here.

“That’s kind of cheesy to say, but it became a very big thing when I started watching ‘High School Musical,’” Dias said. “I’m not gonna lie. I loved ‘High School Musical.’”

The film series set her on a path with the U.S. serving as an end goal, the only place she saw herself going.

After starting college as a 19-year-old in Brazil, the path first took Dias to Australia, where she intended to learn English but where English is different than the kind they spoke on “High School Musical,” different than the kind she speaks now. She didn’t learn English in Australia.

Instead, Dias’ time in Australia led to a stint at a Christian college in Kentucky, where they spoke English and where Dias still couldn’t at first. She cut off most communication with her Brazilian family members in an effort to learn the language faster, immersing herself in an unfamiliar culture in an unfamiliar place.

“I had no idea what Kentucky was,” Dias said. “What the weather, the place I was going (was). Midwest? I had no idea what the Midwest was. Like, what?”

Things are different now. Dias has fully embraced the Midwest and all it has to offer. She is a fan of all four seasons. She said she can’t imagine living elsewhere. But she might have to.

Dias’ mom and stepdad did their best to hide their financial problems from their daughter studying abroad. After staying in Kentucky for a year or so, Dias officially started college at Cloud County Community College in Concordia, Kansas. It was in Kansas where Dias had finally begun to master the English language. It was in Kansas where she took the first official steps to attain a degree. And it was in Kansas where her American dream first began to unravel.

“My dream is to stay here”

Dias doesn’t remember exactly where she was when her mom called from Brazil and broke the news to her daughter, news she had hid from Dias for as long as she could. Brazil’s economy had stumbled since Dias first left five years ago, and her step-father’s dentistry practice fell into bankruptcy, leaving Dias’ parents unable to financially support her American education, one that Dias has always paid for herself to the extent that she could.

“She told me, ‘Come back. You have to come back. There’s no way you’re gonna stay there without paying,’” Dias said of the phone conversation with her mother, who she’s only seen once since she first left Brazil five years ago. “But I told her that, I was like, ‘Mom, I believe in God, and my dream is to stay here. And just trust me. I will work; I’ll do whatever I can to be here.’”

Instead of retreating to Brazil in the wake of her family’s fiscal hardship and her own financial uncertainty, Dias moved forward, joining the dance team at Cloud County on a scholarship and taking up a job in the school’s cafeteria while looking for a 4-year university to attend after her time at Cloud County ran its course. After research and a positive interaction with the International Involvement Office over the phone, Dias put Northwest at the top of her list.

The uncertainty, though, remained. Before being admitted to Northwest, Dias had to provide bank statements and financial records proving she could afford the school’s in-state tuition rate, the only form of a break offered to international students, Dias said.

The proof of financial stability should have sunk Dias’ chances of being admitted to the University, but thanks to some deft accounting and the help of extended family in Brazil, Dias was admitted.

As things in the U.S. seemed to briefly stabilize for Dias, the situation back home further deteriorated, causing Dias’ own mental health to follow suit.

Dias felt the weight of her fami-

ly’s mounting issues in Brazil close to 4,500 miles away in Maryville. She spiraled and ended up hospitalized after her mental health worsened, an event that most of her close friends still don’t know about, she said.

Facing financial insecurity and an overarching uncertainty, Dias found herself at her worst. Her prospects in the U.S. seemed bleak. That was until her managerial communication professor took notice.

“That’s literally when Cindy reached out to me and I got a better job and things started working out better right when I needed, so it was kind of crazy,” Dias said as her voice quieted to a near-whisper. “Well, not crazy.”

“I don’t want to give up”

Dias, at first, was hesitant to move into the Kenkels’ house last summer, despite growing financial pressures and an unclear path forward. Most students don’t live with their teachers.

Dias isn’t sure how many Midwesterners would open their household to a near-stranger in need. She remains in awe of Cindy Kenkel’s genuine care for her. Cases of extreme generosity, ones that come with no expectation of repayment and no unspoken debt, don’t happen back home, Dias said.

“Just the fact that people open up their house for a stranger,” Dias said. “It’s a big thing for me. It’s just — I’m very religious, so I believe that it’s God. Some people are not, but I am, so I know it’s God. There’s not another explanation.”

Cindy Kenkel has spent much of the last six months trying to act like less of a parent, applying tips she’s picked up from podcasts in her third go-around as a mother of a college-aged student. She is a self-described helicopter parent.

Dias has noticed, though she won’t complain. Cindy Kenkel makes sure she’s up in the morning and makes sure her homework is done at night. She lets Dias know she’s mispronouncing a word or complaining too much. And Cindy Kenkel is working on doing less of it.

Cindy and Phil Kenkel have done what they can to turn their house into a home for Dias, offering everything they can by means of support.

They drive her to campus when the weather prohibits walking. They borrowed a bike from friends to make her commute easier. It sat in the garage for a week before Dias finally confessed that she didn’t know how to ride one. So, at 25 years old, they taught her how, which didn’t take all that long, the Kenkels said.

“Didn’t have to get training wheels out,” Phil Kenkel said.

The bike incident, and more particularly, Dias’ hesitance to tell the Kenkels of her inability to ride one helps depict a pillar of her own personality. Dias is fine with wor-

rying about her own problems and her family’s problems overseas, but she cannot stand the thought of herself being worried about.

And that is perhaps why Dias first hid the range of her financial problems from her loved ones in the same way that her mother tried to cache their money shortage back home. The Kenkels knew Dias didn’t have a lot of money, but they didn’t know that Dias, who as an international student is only permitted to work 20 hours a week in an on-campus position and barred from working off-campus, could not afford to pay for her last 30 credit hours.

“It’s just like, ‘What’s gonna happen next?’ It’s kind of scary,” Dias said. “But, the thing is, what if in May I haven’t been able to pay my tuition? How am I gonna — what am I gonna do? I still have one more semester to go.”

Determined not to let the perils of being an international student end her collegiate career before it’s really over, the answer, for Dias, has been two-fold. She has leaned on both her faith and, again, the kindness of strangers.

It was first Cindy Kenkel’s idea for Dias to start a GoFundMe page in an effort to extend her college education, but she didn’t know how to approach the subject. Vulnerability is difficult, Cindy Kenkel said. A friend of the Kenkels told Dias to start the page before Cindy Kenkel could find the words for it.

And so that’s what Dias did, raising \$2,460 over the last month and a half toward her goal of \$14,250, the amount of money it’ll take for Dias to finish her degree. She paid her first installment of the spring semester in January. She may have enough for the second. Her future at Northwest, though, remains in jeopardy.

For Dias, the crowdfunding page portrays both the best and worst of her experience in the U.S. She is beyond grateful for the support she has received from total strangers, acts of kindness that have brought both her and her mother to tears. She still can’t believe the generosity of strangers here, she said.

But Dias is not fond of asking for hand-outs. She would work an off-campus job and pay for her own school if she was allowed to, she said. She said she still believes the U.S. is the land of opportunity — she just wishes she had more of it.

What’s next for Dias remains unclear. It’s possible that she’ll raise enough money to finish her education and enter into the professional world. It’s possible that she could wind up back in Brazil, a year’s worth of college shy of a degree. She’s been back to Brazil once in the last five years, and Dias is hoping to keep it that way. She wants to be here, she said, but she knows the steps ahead of her are not hers to chart alone.

“Everything’s gonna work, in the end, the way it’s supposed to work,” Dias said. “A miracle will happen, but I need to work for it.”

‘Gameday’ raises \$5,000 for Mosaic

ABBY HUGO
Copy Editor | @abby_hugo

What usually serves as a popular hub for dancing college students Friday and Saturday nights was transformed into a hub for hope, games and community togetherness Sunday, Jan. 26.

The Powerhouse Bar & Club and the Redden family raised just over \$5,000 at Gameday at the Powerhouse to support cancer patients at Maryville Mosaic Life Care.

The event memorialized John C. Redden Jr., who after 100 years of combined service to Nodaway County and 45 additional years of service to Northwest, according to The Redden Family website, died in 2015 after battling cancer since 2013.

John Redden’s granddaughter, Makayla Jones, said the event epitomized the service-oriented character of her grandfather.

“I think my grandfather was someone who really emphasized taking care of the community and doing all you could with what you have. So I think this really memorializes those lessons, and I think it’s really awesome opportunity to help other families affected by cancer,” Jones said. “Seeing it firsthand really shows you how much it takes and what a community effort it is to make sure those people and their families are comfortable.”

The event resembled an oversized family gathering. Biological Redden family members were scattered throughout, and community members were welcomed into the mix as if they were as well. Following desserts and homemade chili crafted by Jones’ great aunts, there was a cornhole tournament and a pitch tournament. Pitch is a



MARTINA PASCUZZO | NW MISSOURIAN

The Powerhouse Bar & Grill and the Redden family held a fundraiser where people could donate to support families affected by cancer, enjoy a warm meal and play games Jan. 26. The event memorialized John C. Redden Jr. who died in 2015 after battling cancer since 2013.

popular activity at Redden family gatherings, as it is at many others’, event organizer and grandson to John Redden, Walter Redden said.

Aaraon Jones, a member of the Redden clan, has owned The Powerhouse since June, which Walter Redden said provided the family with a great venue and ample room to “basically bring tailgating elements that are popular in Maryville indoors during the winter.”

Three pairs of cornhole boards were lined up on what usually serves as The Powerhouse’s dance floor. Groups of four gathered around every smaller table in the bar area, shielding their cards from their pitch opponents. Roughly 150 registered players participated in the games. Jones said it made for “a low-key, fun day to just have some fun and raise some money for cancer patients and their families.”

The Redden family has been partnering with the hospital foundation as cancer care ambassadors ever since John Redden received treatment at Mosaic. The foundation has been responsible for funding things such as Mosaic Life Care’s 2019 addition of a Healing Garden. This year’s earnings will support meal, medical equipment and transportation assistance. As a family, the Reddens hope to raise

\$10,000, but the foundation’s overall goal is \$100,000.

“Working with the hospital foundation kind of reignited my passion to volunteer, knowing that the money that I was helping raise stays local and helps my family and friends who are actually currently going through cancer treatments here in Maryville,” Walter Redden said. “The money that we raise directly impacts them.”

SAC hosts first open meeting of 2020

SARA ROBKE
A&E Reporter | @TheMissourian

The Student Activities Council is starting the year off with a new slogan: “New year, new SAC.” This new SAC had its first Open House meeting was on Jan. 23 in the Towerview Room at the J.W. Jones Student Union.

Junior Hannah Lucas, vice president of SAC, explained how meetings were run in the past.

“We’d always get to the meeting, say a few words and then break into sections,” Lucas said. “This year we’ll do a presentation and then break into committees.”

Junior Kyle Harris, president of SAC, said that the new SAC will be focusing on professionalism. He said that as a freshman, he felt that he should have been more involved on campus, and SAC was perfect for him.

“It offers a lot of opportunities,” Harris said. “You are able to practice skills in a real-world environment.”

Harris further explained that many majors require students to be involved with an internship. SAC offers certain opportunities to complete those requirements.

“If you have a finance degree, you can do finances for SAC. If you have a design degree, you can design things for SAC,” Harris said.

SAC is composed of many different committees. These committees plan special events for campus, traditional events, concerts and more. These events include the yearly Flowergram, Grocery Bingo and the Blackbear concert that took place Nov. 9.

“There is a NACA (National As-



MADI NOLTE | NW MISSOURIAN

The Student Activites Council held its first open house meeting Jan. 23 in the J.W. Jones Student Union Tower View Room in an effort to get more students invovled with SAC.

sociation for Campus Activities) conference every year in February,” Lucas said. “It’s where we can meet with performers, meet their managers and give them our email.”

With this information, polls are created for the various committees in SAC to be voted on. Students are encouraged to be involved in SAC in order to vote on these events.

“There is never a bad time to start SAC,” Harris said. He further explained that both he and Lucas joined spring of their freshmen year.

Harris began with the position of director of lecture and then went on

to become president.

“I was committed and wanted to be more involved with SAC,” Harris said. “So I became president.”

In order to promote for SAC, Lucas is constantly wearing a SAC T-shirt. SAC has an information table and other events at the Union to promote themselves.

Students are able to help with any event and are able to join any committee and however many they wish in SAC.

Lucas explained that anyone can be involved with SAC. All students need to do is apply for positions and receive an interview

with the board, except for the position of the president. In order to be president of SAC, students need to be the head of one of the committees for a term and then apply on the SAC website.

“We will be looking to fill the position of director of concert in the next month of next semester,” Harris said. Harris further explains that the next concert will not be until Spring of 2021.

In the next month, SAC will be featuring the yearly Flowergram and Step Afrika!

Ranking top five Girl Scout cookies

KAITLIN GRAHAM
Opinion Columnist
@kaitlin_mg



It’s Girl Scout cookie season. Despite the cost of Girl Scout cookies increasing every year, it’s still a time many people look forward to throughout the year.

There are two companies that bake Girl Scout cookies, ABC Smart Cookies and Little Brownie Baker, which is why different regions may have different names for the same cookie.

It is important to buy Girl Scout cookies because, according to the official website of Girl Scout’s, “When you buy delicious Girl Scout cookies, you’re helping power new, unique and amazing experiences for them — experiences that

broaden their worlds, teach them essential skills and launch them into a lifetime of leadership. “

The proceeds that the Girl Scouts earn from selling cookies allows them to do things like travel, go to summer camps or do STEM projects.

“I believe that it is important to support Girl Scouts because they are teaching girls to be GIRLS. That stands for Go Getter, Innovator, Risk Taker and Leader,” said freshman Bethany Conely.

“This is an acronym we have been using the last few years, and I believe that it’s true. I feel like I’ve gotten stronger in those aspects since I started scouting,” Conely said. “The troops are also funded by the money, so by buying cookies you are also supporting the troops activities and adventures that they do.”

There are 12 varieties of Girl

Scout cookies available, but here is a ranking of the top five.

Coming in first place: Thin Mints. These cookies are chocolate, with just the right amount of mint flavor. The best way to eat them is straight out of the freezer. Straight out of the package, these might be closer to third or fourth place, but when they are cold, they are hands down the best Girl Scout cookies.

Second place goes to Thanks-A-Lots. These cookies are shortbread flavored with a layer of chocolate on the bottom. These cookies are very convenient for making s’mores, because the chocolate is built in.

Another one of the most loved Girl Scout cookies are the Caramel DeLites. These cookies, sometimes called Samoas, are a shortbread cookie that has a chocolate bottom with caramel covered coconut flakes covering the top. Its finishing

touch is a chocolate drizzle. This cookie is a good option for fans of caramel and coconut flavors.

The cookies coming in fourth place are Peanut Butter Patties, otherwise known as Tagalongs. The base of this cookie is once again shortbread, which was the first cookie ever sold by Girl Scouts. The shortbread base has a layer of peanut butter spread on top, and the whole thing is coated in chocolate. This is the ideal cookie for fans of Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups.

Finally, S’mores cookies are in fifth place. These cookies taste just like they sound like they would: like s’mores. It starts with a graham cracker cookie, then a layer of marshmallow is added on top of it, and the entire cookie is covered with chocolate. This cookie is an interesting take on a classic campfire treat.

THE STROLLER: Your Bearcat doesn’t want days off

Ah, the Midwest. It’s not only a place, but something that runs deep in the blood of those born here. We bleed ranch dressing, we say ‘ope’ when we scooch past somebody in the grocery store, and most importantly, we will never, ever, EVER have a snow day.

I remember when snow days were announced in high school, I would groan and put a palm to my face. I mean, how am I supposed to make my Midwest blood stronger if I’m not allowed to brave through the cold? If I can’t bundle up like an Eskimo and say, “It wouldn’t be so bad if it weren’t for the wind,” then am I even a Midwesterner? Have I proven that I am even worthy to say that I am from the Midwest?

Here at Northwest, I don’t have to do that. I know that when I get up in the morning after an ice storm, blizzard or even in below-zero temperatures, I will be expected to go to class. I am more than happy to risk slipping on ice or catching pneumonia so I can attend.

Even when the schools around the Maryville area close down for the day, I can count on Northwest to expect me to be in class or be square. Those schools don’t know anything about safety anyway. How do they expect their students to be safe if they don’t practice driving on 1-inch icy roads? How are they preparing their students for college when they are huddled up, nice and warm, at home?

If I were them, I’d be pretty disappointed in my school.

At Northwest, we’re proud to be a school that never has a snow day. So what if I slip on icy roads on my way to class? So what if I catch a cold or pneumonia? At least I can say that I went to class.

Here at Northwest, I know that I have true Midwest, ranch dressing blood in my veins.

The Stroller has been a tradition since 1918 and does not reflect the views of The Northwest Missourian. Submit a Stroller to northwestmissourian@gmail.com

'Hounds scrap for district seeding

CALVIN SILVERS
Sports Reporter | @CalvinSilvers

The Maryville boys basketball team re-gained traction Monday night after its matchup on Jan. 24, against Savannah was postponed.

Due to inclement weather, there have been a couple of games postponed this year, the most recent kept the Spoofhounds from seeing game action for five days. However, coach Matt Stoecklein has found ways to prevent his team from falling into a slump.

"We've done scrimmages with uniforms on instead of practice jerseys," Stoecklein said. "We've had open gyms as well. As to get them ready for the games, they're already ready. They just want to play."

This recent break from harsh weather allowed the Spoofhounds to travel to Cameron, Missouri, where they faced Cameron (5-10) in the 2020 Cameron Basketball Tournament. This was the first pool game for the Spoofhounds.

The Spoofhounds packed their impressive shooting streak from Jan. 16, against Falls City (Nebraska) into their gym bags to bring with them. Maryville quickly pulled out to a commanding 18-7 lead at the end of the first quarter. Once grabbing that lead, Maryville never looked back.

The Spoofhounds (4-7) arrived back to Maryville with another win in the column as they won 69-44 and improved their winning streak to two games.

Senior guard Tate Oglesby led the way in scoring for both teams with 17, junior guard Ben Walker had 15 points and junior guard Trey Houchin had 14. In Houchin's performance, 12 of his 15 points came from beyond the arc.

Maryville will continue pool play when they face Smithville Jan. 30.

Maryville, coming off a rather impressive 24-3 record during the 2018-19 season, has had to battle with the frustration of seeing significantly higher numbers in the losing column compared to last year. Oglesby isn't worried about that and is more keyed in on using this winning streak to build confidence.

"We just can't settle with where we're at right now," Oglesby said.



Maryville boys basketball junior guard Caleb Kreizinger shoots the ball over a Falls City defender in the Spoofhounds' 70-53 win over the Tigers Jan. 16 at Maryville High School.

"Obviously, we want to get better, and that's the goal. We're coming to a big part of the season finishing this tournament and rolling into

conference games." Oglesby knows it best, Maryville's conference (MEC), and more importantly, MSHSAA's

Class 3 District 16, provides a journey that's not made for the faint-hearted. The powerhouses that makeup Maryville's district in-

UP NEXT

Maryville @ Smithville

7:30 p.m. Jan. 30

cludes Central (KC) at 11-6, which sits atop the district standings, followed by Lawson (8-8) and Lathrop (6-3). Maryville finds itself in the cellar, sitting in last place.

Stoecklein has begun rallying his troops and laying out the battleplan before them.

"We need to be everything that we've been practicing on," Stoecklein said. "We need to move the ball to get a better shot, sometimes we come down and take a bad shot. This allows teams to get a rebound and push the ball."

The key to success cannot rely on one side of the ball, and Stoecklein continued emphasizing the key components to dethrone the teams sitting atop the district.

"On the defensive side, we need to be in the right position," Stoecklein said. "We're too far from the ball most times."

The Spoofhounds, while practicing these physical abilities, are also using practice time to train their mental states. The message has been pinned that every time you play someone in the conference, you can win as long as you believe in what you're doing.

While Stoecklein has a firm grasp of what he expects to come from his team in the near future, Oglesby has stood in the front lines and accepted the pressures that come along with the journey at hand.

"We've felt a little pressure, especially with the records of Maryville teams the past couple years, but I mean, we're still trying to prove ourselves really," Oglesby said. "We're trying to get rolling now, and hopefully we can figure a couple more things out, and we should be able to play out pretty well."

The recent confidence and complete play of the Spoofhounds seems to shine light on the positives of a season that still has potential.

"Our confidence grows more and more every day," Stoecklein said. "This is based on how the boys have responded and know they're starting to do more things right. Everything is looking much better."

WBB CONTINUED FROM A12

"I'm probably not overly smart for not putting her in the starting lineup somewhere earlier," Meyer joked.

The Bearcats will have an opportunity to modify their recent losing ways when they travel to Wichita, Kansas Jan. 30 to face Newman (9-11, 4-7 MIAA). The Jets and Bearcats play once this year, which will be the first meeting between programs in the history of the NCAA.

The matchup holds significance when it comes to seeding in the conference, one that's close enough as is. The winner of the game will have the tiebreaker in the instance that the two teams are separated by only that, which is very possible with Newman currently in ninth.

Following the game against Newman will be a trip to Edmond, Oklahoma, to face Central Oklahoma (14-5, 8-3 MIAA). The road trip will be the first since the Jan. 11 loss to Washburn.

"I think it'll be good for our kids and our team to get back on a bus and be all together where that main focus is basketball," Meyer said. "Home games are great ... but I think we focus better on the road."

Despite the record of the opponent, Meyer said, Northwest has to stick to what it does best. The Bearcats have been in close games with teams among the likes of Central Missouri and Hays. The Bearcats have also been in games that resulted in blowout victories. Nothing prior to each matchup, Meyer said, matters when it comes time to play the game.

"We can't go in with a mindset of 'This team's not as good as the ones that we've played,'" Meyer said. "(Newman) doesn't have the record of some of the teams we've played, but it's a team that's going to play hard. So if we don't come in and prepare and have a mindset that we're playing a top-three team in the league we're gonna be in trouble."

MBB CONTINUED FROM A12

The challenge ahead for Northwest, one the team has dealt with at times this season and will deal with again in Wichita, Kansas, in its matchup with Newman, is getting up for a game that not many fans will watch, getting energized for a matchup with a preconceived lack of energy.

"You've got to create hunger," Schneider said. "It's one of the toughest things to do in sports, is (to) create hunger when it's not necessarily there."

"You're going to Newman on a Thursday night — probably going

STURDY CONTINUED FROM A12

"There are certain things that I feel very strongly about in offensive football," Sturdy said. "It'll all hinge on what we can do, what we're built to do — we've gotta find those things out."

As for Sturdy, as a person, he doesn't differ much from the traits of his former assistant coach that is

to be a dead gym. These guys just played in front of 5,000 in the Ford Center five months ago," Schneider added, referring to Northwest's national title game in Evansville, Indiana, 10 months ago.

Schneider said he thought Northwest's win over Hays was the team's most complete offensive effort of the season. Against the Tigers, the Bearcats started to do what they have at times struggled to this season. They played like the team they are now, not the team they were a season ago.

Schneider said teams within the MIAA have developed new defensive schemes in attacking Northwest's offense, sending help de-

now his boss, Wright said. They're both, Wright said, laid back individuals that are down to earth. With that, they're both not overly flashy in terms of personalities that stick out, he added.

Within his time here, whether it be three years or 20, the first and foremost goal is to win football games. The second, Sturdy said, is to build on relationships that go farther than the sport. That, he add-

fense into the lane, in part to account for Northwest's pair of dynamic sophomore guards. The switch, which inherently comes with the decision to leave players like senior forward Ryan Welty and junior forward Ryan Hawkins unguarded on the wing, was recognized and exposed in the matchup with Hays, where Northwest shot 16-of-33 from deep.

"(We found) a rhythm that I said we've been searching for probably the last month or so," Schneider said. "Just driving more-so to pass than to score."

For McCollum, the win over Hays did not represent in the solving of a puzzle, but rather, just fit-

ting two pieces together toward a larger picture. The win, he said, did come not come with any form of arrival or with any turned corner, but it helped the coach find answers to the questions that have weighed on him for close to a month.

McCollum is still unsure what the answer will mean in the larger scheme of the season. The Bearcats' last game of the season will say more, depending on when and where it comes and whether or not they win.

"You won't know until the end," McCollum said. "That's what my assistant always said. It's like, 'Well, what do you think?' 'Well, I don't know. We'll find out.'"

Sturdy said. "I think I can speak on that because I've been at every level, virtually. So, you know, guys say this all the time, but the big time is where you're at, and football is football and the kids are the kids, that doesn't change."

"Football is football, and it's not about the stadium or anything like that, it's about the relationships,"

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Girls forge new path in wrestling

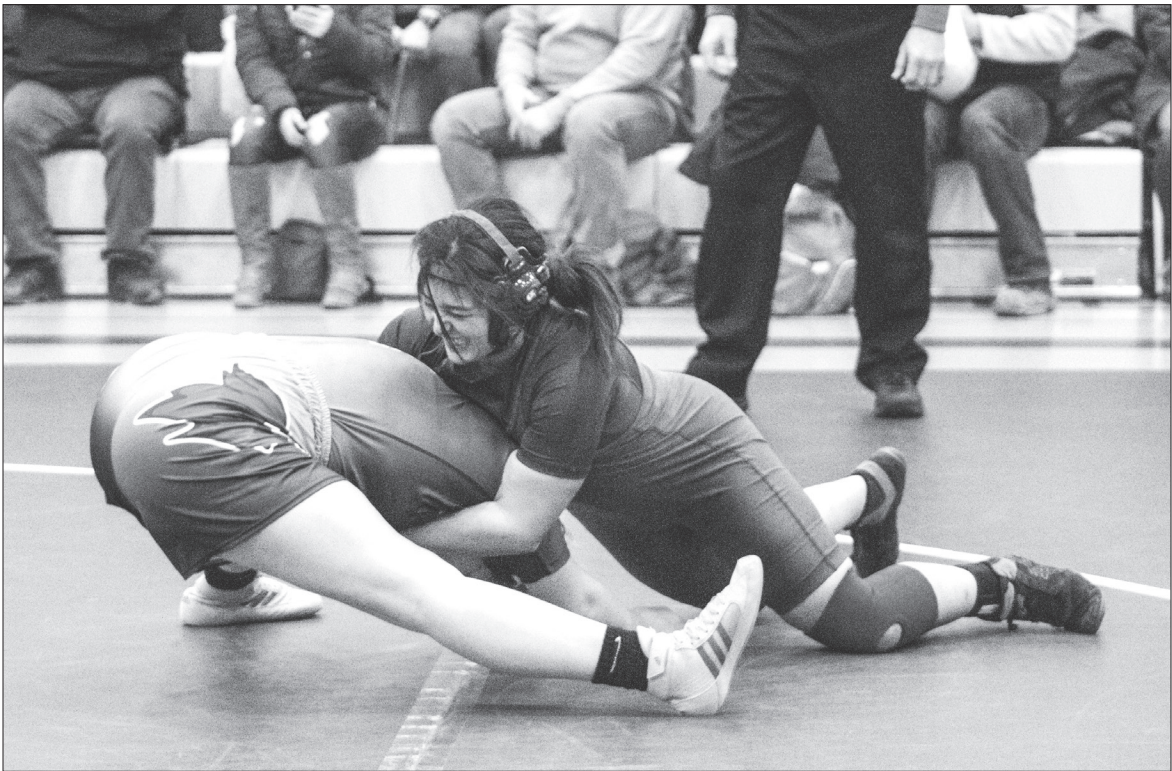
ROMAN METCALF
Sports Reporter I @Roman_Metcalf87

Maryville High School wrestling, traditionally speaking, was a sport that was run by boys.

As of 2018, that changed. A proposal, one that was attempting to make girls wrestling its own sport, was passed by the board members of the Missouri State High School Athletic Association. The passing of the proposal allowed girls wrestling to become its own entity, whereas the girls previously had to wrestle against the boys. Jason West, a member of MSHSAA's executive staff for the last 12 years, said that allowing girls to have their own sport had been a topic on the table.

"It actually was a topic that was discussed for a few years with our wrestling adviser committee and the thought was it just hadn't gained enough popularity," West said. "There were certainly some high-level female wrestlers at the high school level, but the committee didn't think there were enough female wrestlers to have a competitive balance to have its own section and championships."

The passing of the proposal, West said, was due to the rise in participation, which was convincing enough to give the girls their own sport. After the proposal was passed, he added, there was a rapid increase in participation rates



MARYVILLE girls wrestling senior Amber Ebrecht attempts a takedown against her opponent from Sabetha Jan. 16 at Maryville High School. Ebrecht, along with the other girls, believe this is a step towards more equality in sports.

across the state.

The MSHSAA wrestling committee passed the proposal with 202 members that stood in affirmation and 41 that voted in negation.

With the proposal being passed, West said, the figure that has already risen past expectations and is projected to grow even higher.

Maryville's team includes five

wrestlers in the recently-founded sport. The team is made up of freshmen Avery White, Julia Van Gundy and Katie Weiss, sophomore Cameron Mackey and senior Amber Ebrecht.

The girls are a part of the movement to break down the inequality barrier when it comes to athletic representation. They're hoping that

this is another step in the direction for girls wanting to wrestle and participate in other athletics.

Katie Weiss said she was happy with how the boys on the wrestling team were accepting of the girls joining wrestling, considering it's traditionally a male-dominated sport.

The male wrestlers, White said,

UP NEXT

MHS Tournament
10 a.m. Feb. 1
'Hound Pound

convinced them to come and try out to be on the team.

When starting out, Weiss and White said, wrestling with the boys was kind of uncomfortable, but because of the friendships and relationships they built with their teammates, it quickly became less weird for them.

"Well it's kind of awkward sometimes when you have to wrestle boys, like at practice and stuff, but we got used to it really fast," Weiss said

The girls, the duo added, are now friends with a lot of the boys on the team, which creates a comfortable environment.

Weiss (13-0) and White (7-4) are looking to continue to dominate in the division of girls wrestling, proving that girls can be just as good or even better than the boys.

First-year coach Dallas Barrett, Weiss said, has created a place where the girls feel accepted and prepared to compete when the time comes.

"Coach Barrett has done a really good job," Weiss said. "He doesn't treat us any different from the other wrestlers; he stays on us about our weight and our health."

Spoofhounds keep hot hand despite break

CORBIN SMITH
Sports Reporter I @curly_corbs

For Maryville girls basketball, inclement weather has proven to be a formidable foe as the team nears the homestretch of its season.

With the cancelation of both the Jan. 21 and Jan. 23 matchups against Penney and St. Joseph-LeBlond, respectively, there have now been four games that needed to be rescheduled.

"We're disappointed to have a disruption in our schedule because when you're on a roll, you want to keep on rolling," coach Quintin Albrecht said.

The lack of games, Albrecht said, is frustrating because the team was starting to get back on track. But, he added, the importance of each practice heightens in situations like the ones his team is presented with.

"We deal with this every winter, and we have to take it in stride," Albrecht said. "When you miss games

and can't practice, you have to use the practice time you have wisely."

With winters that Maryville endures annually, it's hard to use it as a crutch for lackadaisical performance. The Maryville coach acknowledges that every team the Spoofhounds will face are struggling with the same inclement weather.

With a week off, it's possible that the 'Hounds show some rust in their next bout. However, Albrecht is optimistic about his players getting past this icy speed bump.

"On the positive side, when you have a really young team, that time off maybe helps us get fresh legs and fresh mental approach," Albrecht said. "We just gotta come out and play the best that we can play."

With 10 of the 18 players being freshmen, not many of the girls are used to playing such a long season compared to middle school basketball. Albrecht thinks that should be no problem in continuing the sea-

UP NEXT

MHS @ Cameron
6:30 p.m. Jan. 30
Cameron, Missouri

son "business as usual."

To hop back on schedule, Maryville (13-2) showed no rust in ending its 11-day game freeze Jan. 27 with a 54-43 win over district opponent, Lawson (11-6). The Spoofhounds have been working on both sides of the ball, but Albrecht emphasized the offensive changes that will help them win more games in the future.

"From here on out, you'll see a more aggressive team offensively," Albrecht said. "You'll see us attacking the basket a little bit more, not relying on the perimeter shot quite as much."

FULL STORY ONLINE:
NWMISSOURINEWS.COM



MARYVILLE girls basketball senior guard Molly Renshaw fights off tough defense in the Spoofhounds' Jan. 26 66-35 win over Falls City (NE).

Track and field runs toward top of rankings

NATHAN ENGLISH
Sports Reporter I @ThananEnglish

Northwest indoor track and field competed in two states in one weekend, sometimes at the very same moments. The team was at both the Bearcat Open Jan. 24-25 in Hughes Fieldhouse and the Jayhawk Classic Jan. 24 in Lawrence, Kansas.

A handful of runners were at the Jayhawk Classic. Coach Brandon Masters spearheaded operational duties for the home track meet while assistant coach Nick Gibson

was with the athletes in Lawrence.

The highlight of the Jayhawk Classic was the women's 4-x-400 meter relay team that consists of seniors Hiba Mahgoub and Jordan Hammond and sophomores Addie Palser and Moe Bianchi. The team ran a 3 minute, 36 seconds, 4 miliseconds race, which is good for a program record and is currently the second-fastest time in the nation.

"Wow, they brought it," Masters said of the women's 4-x-400 meter relay team.

Masters uttered the phrase "I

did not expect" a lot when referring about his team's performance. The team, Masters said, is in the midst of a pretty grueling training regimen that does not always produce high marks right away.

The performance of sophomore Omar Austin was one of those performances Masters did not expect but wasn't completely surprised by. Austin won the 60-meter dash with a time of 6.87 seconds. Austin was also a part of the second-place men's 4-x-400 meter relay team along with freshmen Gavyn Monday, Trey Motton and Corbin Smith.

"I never underestimate Omar," Masters said. "We will see some magic soon in the 400 from him."

Austin, however, was surprised by how fast he was in the 4-x-400

meter relay.

"It kinda shocked me a little bit," Austin said. "It's gonna be a good season right here; it's gonna be a good one."

Austin's preparation in the summer for the 60-meter dash is what he credits to his success. Austin focused on power by getting a lot of time in the weight room, which he said helps him keep his speed and finish strong through the races.

Austin had been nursing a minor groin injury which limited his training going into the meet.

"It kinda had me a little nervous going into my 60," Austin said. "I'm not normally nervous going into my races because I practice hard."

Austin was humble when asked what he could work on, saying there

UP NEXT

NW @ Pitt State Invitational
9:30 a.m. Feb. 1
Pittsburg, Kansas

is always room for improvement, but he expects to be there at the end.

"I really want to do what I can for this team; I want to help coach get his goals," Austin said.

Austin expects big things from himself and the team this season, especially at the NCAA Division II National Championships.

"I want to get one of them rings, the big ones," Austin said.

Senior Audrey Wichmann had one of the standout performances for this weekend. Wichmann, a multi-event athlete, won and set a personal best in the high jump with a jump of 5 feet, 8 1/2 inches. The jump was also good for the second-best in program history.

"Audrey was amazing," Masters said. "That's a massive jump for this time of year."

Wichmann was rather close to clearing the next bar as well but just barely missed the mark.

"I almost got it and I think I could have retired on that bar," Wichmann said.

Wichmann also participated in the women's 800-meter run, which she ran in for training purposes for her pentathlon.

"It was really fun to go out there and not really worry about a time but just kinda get an extra practice rep in," Wichmann said.

Wichmann won the event.

Wichmann is pleased with her and the team's overall success and thinks Master's training and team attitude have a lot to do with the early success.

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MAMBA OUT

Remembering the late basketball legend, father

ANDREW WEGLEY
Managing Editor
@andrewwegley



For sports fans of everywhere, and even nonsports fans, Jan. 26 was one of those days, one that you’ll remember for the rest of their life in some capacity. It was one of those rare occurrences where you’ll always remember who you were with or what you were doing when the world changed.

When he heard former NBA star and future Hall of Famer Kobe Bryant, along with his 13-year-old daughter, Gianna, and seven others died in a helicopter crash Jan. 26 in Calabasas, California, on their way to a youth basketball game, Northwest men’s basketball coach Ben McCollum was already at one, supporting his son at a youth tournament in the Kansas City area.

Northwest women’s basketball coach Austin Meyer was on his way to a George Strait concert in St. Joseph, Missouri, with his wife when he heard the news, en route to their first date night of the decade. Men’s assistant coach Zach Schneider was in his room when he got a text from his girlfriend breaking the news before flocking to Twitter to find out for himself.

Josh Rexroat, a media relations manager at Northwest Athletics and lifelong Lakers fan, was sitting in his bedroom playing video games when he first saw the news reported by TMZ on Twitter. He hoped it wasn’t true, he said. As more information became available over the next half-hour, he was forced to believe it.

Schneider said he felt the same thing. Meyer did too. In that moment of uncertainty, facing a storm of tweets he hoped were untrue,

Rexroat felt what we all felt. How could a basketball player who seemed to be immortal fit to live in immortality be dead at 41?

“Yeah, it was — I mean, probably like everyone else, you just don’t believe it when you first see it,” Meyer said.

“It was kind of one of those deaths that you just expected him to be around basketball for the next 40 years,” Schneider said.

“I was definitely in denial when I first saw it,” Rexroat said. “And then it just kept going and going ... and then ESPN started covering it all the time, and I was like, ‘I guess it’s real.’”

Bryant’s impact stretched far beyond the courts he played on and the cities he trafficked in, far beyond Los Angeles. It stretched beyond basketball and across the country, a phenomenon that was clear to Rexroat when he walked into the Foster Fitness Center the day after Bryant’s death and saw dozens of people clad in Kobe apparel — jerseys, shoes, T-shirts — honoring a man whom most, if not all of them, never met.

“What he meant to me was — he was just an inspiration,” Rexroat said. “I’m sure he meant that to a lot of other people. He was an inspiration to basketball. Just hoping you could be like him someday, even though you knew you weren’t gonna be.”

The same is true for Meyer, who was in middle school when Bryant made his NBA debut in 1996. He would watch basketball on television before heading outside to mimic the moves he’d just seen. He was, of course, never as good as Bryant. Not many are. Not many will be.

His jump shot and fade away aren’t exactly easy to copy, nor do they apply to Meyer’s role as a coach. Bryant’s patented work ethic, the Mamba Mentality, was

something that stuck with Meyer, something he tries to instill in the players he coaches.

“Nobody outworked him,” Meyer said.

But it’s perhaps in Schneider where Bryant’s global impact is most tangible. Through every dunk and game-winner, every All-Star appearance and championship win, Bryant inspired a generation of athletes. He wasn’t always likable, but everyone respected his abilities on the court.

“He was my favorite player to watch,” Schneider said. “Just kind of fell in love with basketball because of him.”

Schneider remembers watching Bryant’s 60-point finale against Utah in 2016 and rewatched it again Jan. 27 when ESPN re-aired it as a tribute to the late Laker. Schneider doesn’t often get emotional, he said, but he teared up rewatching Bryant’s fourth-quarter performance, one that came with 23 points and a game-sealing 3-pointer.

It’s somewhat ironic what the sports world has become in Bryant’s wake. Often seen as an escape from the realities of everyday life, sports programming has been a direct reminder of those same realities in the last few days.

The conversation around the NBA has been dominated by Bryant since the moment the crash was first reported. It was reported live on air during the Pro Bowl. It has become a constant conversation in the week leading up to the Super Bowl. When I flipped away from a monologue on ESPN eulogizing Bryant Monday night and landed on a Fox Sports Midwest broadcast of an NHL game, a channel I stayed on for less than five seconds, the play-by-play announcer was talking about the crash.

There is no escaping the Bry-

ant conversation and the heartache that comes with it. And there is no escaping the realities of the Bryant conversation, either. It’s not possible, I don’t think, to have a responsible talk about Bryant without mentioning the sexual assault allegation made against him in 2003, one that ended in a civil suit that was settled for an undisclosed amount of money.

Eventually, in the aftermath of the publicized court case and the unpublicized settlement, Bryant was again embraced by Los Angeles, rewarded with a \$136 million contract and endorsed by Nike, Spalding and Coca-Cola. Whether justice was ever really done in that case isn’t for me to decide, nor is it really markable.

What is markable, though, was Bryant’s personal growth past 2003. He became a sort of role model. He inspired a generation. He became a husband and a father. He leaves behind a wife and three daughters.

“For his kids and for the other people that were on something like that,” McCollum said, “that’s not ‘Kobe,’ that’s ‘Dad.’”

In his wake, Bryant has left a basketball community reflecting on life and grappling with loss. There

have been more tears shed in the NBA this week than any other week I can remember. The conversation around basketball has been decidedly unrelated to basketball.

Bryant was 41 years old and still growing into fatherhood. One of his daughters has yet to reach her first birthday. The biggest tragedy in this, among many, is the family he left behind, who likely found out via Twitter that Bryant wasn’t coming home.

This was never meant to be some kind of touching tribute about a basketball player from someone who never watched Bryant play in his best basketball, from someone who never watched him play in person. Rather, it’s meant to be an examination of the impact Bryant had — both before and after the fatal crash in Calabasas — on the world and how we look at it.

Bryant made a lot of people feel a lot of emotions when he took to the court for 20 seasons in Los Angeles. Now, his death is making a lot of people think.

“I think that’s probably what you can learn from these kinds of perspectives,” McCollum said. “You need to invest in the people that you love and that love you.”

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Northwest women's basketball senior guard Mallory McConkey battles in the post during the Bearcats' 70-59 loss to No. 10 Fort Hays Jan. 25.

Women aim for postseason bid

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

Northwest women's basketball coach Austin Meyer sat in front of a room full of reporters Jan. 28 at the Northwest Athletics media luncheon inside of Pizza Ranch when he expressed that one of the goals for the team was to play in the MIAA Tournament in Kansas City, Missouri, March 4-8.

That goal, with now less than a month left in the regular season, is still attainable.

"We always talk about getting better every day," Meyer said. "One of the tangible goals that we had with our program was to get to Kansas City. ... To get there would be a big step for us moving forward."

As of Jan. 6, the Bearcats had a record of 8-5 that had the program sitting at fifth in the conference. That night's win over Rogers State was the last one that Northwest has seen.



Since then, the 'Cats have dropped five straight, leaving them toeing the line of either watching the postseason or being a part of it. That is in part due to the continued absence of senior guard Kendey Eaton due to injury. The void put there from the team's leading scorer was coupled with a formidable schedule against some of the top programs in the country. Those two reasons, among others, have left a handful of games that haven't been kind to the Bearcats.

The losing skid, Meyer said, isn't something that's continuously on the minds among people in the program. The Bearcats are still hoping to get to the MIAA Tournament, which requires, at least, a decent second half to the season.

The problem is: second halves have seemed to be the ghost that haunts the Bearcats.

The freshest example came against No. 10 Fort Hays. Northwest had scraped, clawed and defended its

way to a 7-point lead at the break.

"That was probably our most complete half of the year," Meyer said. "But as we know, it's a four-quarter game."

Meyer's proclamation is common knowledge. For Northwest, the second half of games have been a key struggle throughout the losing skid. In the last five games, the Bearcats have been outscored 184-141 in the second half.

Following their best half of basketball was a half that was one to forget, one that saw a lapse in defensive execution and one that saw Hays walk away with an 11-point victory.

That's where the program is, Meyer said minutes after the loss Jan. 25. It's in a spot where it had to keep fighting and grinding to get better.

"Good teams, that's what they do," Meyer said about Hays. "They're gonna fight you all of the way through the game. So we've just gotta be able to handle adver-

UP NEXT

NW @ Newman
5:30 p.m. Jan. 30
Wichita, Kansas

sity and be ready to play, you know, extremely hard."

In some ways, the hot start was due to inserting senior guard Mallory McConkey into the starting lineup for the first time this year. McConkey sat out the first half of the season due to injury. Since her return, she has served as the sixthman for the Bearcats, often providing a spark to both ends of the floor.

"Right now she's just playing at a really high level for us," Meyer said. "I think with her being injured early, and out, it was one of those things that, you know, she probably starts at the beginning of the season for us."

SEE WBB | A9

Men look for hunger, consistency

ANDREW WEGLEY
Managing Editor | @andrewwegley

Riding a 10-game win streak into an MIAA road trip, Northwest men's basketball finds itself ranked No. 1 again in this week's NABC Division II Top 25 poll, a ranking that Northwest's coaching staff said means nothing.

The Bearcats (18-1, 8-1 MIAA) are coming off one of their best offensive performances to date after an 83-57 thrashing of Fort Hays State Jan. 25, one that coach Ben McCollum said served as a step in the right direction after a series of close MIAA matchups, including a 5-point win over Nebraska-Kearney Jan. 23.

But McCollum, of course, was quick to note Jan. 28 that the game did not serve as a turning point, and if it did, he wouldn't be sure until several months from now. His team, McCollum said, has not yet arrived at where it's headed.

For McCollum, the Bearcats' 52.8% field goal percentage against Fort Hays does not matter. Neither, he said, does the feat that lies ahead of Northwest. The team could surpass the 20-win mark for the ninth year in a row over the weekend with wins over Newman (8-12, 2-9 MIAA) Jan. 30 and Central Oklahoma (7-13, 4-7 MIAA) Feb. 1. But McCollum said he's not enamored with the potential accomplishment or even concerned with winning the conference matchups. His focus, per usual, is elsewhere.

"It's probably more important



UP NEXT

NW @ Newman
7:30 p.m. Jan. 30
Wichita, Kansas

ant that we play well," McCollum said. "It's just — you have to play well. You have to practice well. You have to get better and it has to be every single day. And if we do that, then I'll feel good about things."

The week ahead for Northwest poses a unique set of challenges. The team's on-court opponents, at least on paper, are inferior. But, assistant coach Zach Schneider said, there is a certain degree of difficulty that could come with Northwest's road trip through Kansas and Oklahoma, one that has followed the team all season.

On the heels of a 38-0 campaign that ended with an NCAA Division II National Championship win, Northwest has not played with the chip on the shoulder that helped drive and define the team a season ago.

Sophomore guards Diego Bernard and Trevor Hudgins, for example, had never lost a collegiate game before Northwest fell to Central Missouri Dec. 16. The natural hunger that came with a low external expectation last season is no longer present, Schneider said. His sentiments have been echoed by McCollum throughout the season.



Sophomore guard Diego Bernard claps while transitioning back onto defense in Northwest's 83-57 win over Fort Hays State Jan. 25 at Bearcat Arena.

Football fills void left from former coach

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

While Northwest football was on a plane ride home after its Dec. 7 loss to Ferris State in the Super Region 3 Championship, fans took to social media to demand change.

Whether it be to philosophy, the coaching staff, or the personnel on the field, people just wanted something to change. For the better, of course.

The change that followed consisted of the departure of former co-offensive coordinator Charlie Flohr, the demotion of the other half to that Joel Osborn and the addition of the new offensive coordinator Todd Sturdy.

Flohr took a job to be at the helm of the program at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. That change, coach Rich Wright said, wasn't expected. It was, he said, possible, but not expected.

That left the program with the responsibility of filling the void that was left by the coordinator who had been on staff for the most recent National Championship in 2016.

As of Jan. 9, that hole was filled by Sturdy, the coach that adds nearly three decades worth of experience to the staff.

"He's just got a wealth of experience," Wright said. "Am I silly enough to think that he's going to sit around here for 20 years? Probably not. But if he's here for three, and he can help make our program better ... I tend to veer towards a different perspective, 'Can you make this place better while you're here?' If you do that, and you have an opportunity to move on to a bigger and better place, there's nothing wrong with that."

Sturdy's most recent coaching tenure was in a two-year stint as the guy at the helm at MidAmerica Nazarene from 2018-2020. During that time, the Pioneers compiled a record of 11-11. The 7-win season in 2019 was the first for the program since 2015 and three more wins than his first year.

Prior to the two seasons with the Pioneers, he was the offensive coordinator at Eastern Washington, Washington State, Iowa State and Northern Iowa. Those experiences were all prefaced with his first head coaching job at his alma mater, St. Ambrose in Davenport, Iowa, from 1995-2006.

Sturdy's time at Ambrose included a stint with Wright, who serves as the defensive coordinator from 2000-04. Now, 16 years later, the two switch roles. In some ways, the journey for the two has come full circle. The previous experience, Sturdy said, came into play when taking the position.

"That was a big part of the decision," Sturdy said. "Whenever you get an opportunity to work with someone you know, that's a key, especially in this profession. I have a very, very positive opinion of Rich Wright; he and I are very close that way. ... That made it easier because there's history there; we know each other, we respect each other and, you know, that helps when we make these decisions."

Sturdy's offensive philosophy isn't one that he's aware of yet. Of course, there's an idea that he has in mind. The person that has, as he said, coached over 200 football games has an idea of what he'd like to do, he said. But ultimately, he added, it depends on what players he's working with.

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